

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5279

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Health & Long-Term Care, January 29, 2007  
Ways & Means, March 5, 2007

**Title:** An act relating to the children's environmental health and protection advisory council.

**Brief Description:** Creating the children's environmental health and protection advisory council.

**Sponsors:** Senators Franklin, Fairley, Kohl-Welles, Rasmussen, Regala, Keiser and Jacobsen.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Health & Long-Term Care: 1/22/07, 1/29/07 [DPA-WM, DNP, w/oRec].

Ways & Means: 3/05/07 [DPA(HEA), DNP, w/oRec].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Keiser, Chair; Franklin, Vice Chair; Fairley, Kastama, Kohl-Welles and Marr.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Pflug, Ranking Minority Member and Parlette.

**Minority Report:** That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senator Carrell.

**Staff:** Rhoda Donkin (786-7465)

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended by Committee on Health & Long-Term Care.

Signed by Senators Prentice, Chair; Fraser, Vice Chair, Capital Budget Chair; Pridemore, Vice Chair, Operating Budget; Fairley, Hatfield, Keiser, Kohl-Welles, Oemig, Rasmussen, Regala, Rockefeller and Tom.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Parlette.

**Minority Report:** That it be referred without recommendation.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

Signed by Senators Zarelli, Ranking Minority Member; Brandland, Carrell, Hewitt, Honeyford, Roach and Schoesler.

**Staff:** Elaine Deschamps (786-7441)

**Background:** Studies have shown that children are more susceptible to exposure to environmental pollutants than adults. They are particularly vulnerable to such hazards as lead, pesticides, air pollutants, contaminated water, toxic waste, secondhand tobacco smoke, and industrial and home chemicals. Children are more susceptible because they absorb toxins at a much higher rate relative to body weight than adults. They also have not formed natural biological barriers that block toxins from entering the blood stream, and they tend to play in areas where they are exposed to toxins.

**Summary of Bill (Recommended Amendment):** The Children's Environmental Health and Protections Advisory Council (Council ) is created. Membership includes 15 people representing the Legislature, several state agencies, parents of children who have been identified as having been exposed to an environmental hazard, and an expert in environmental toxicology.

The Council must meet at least four times per year to review existing laws, rules and regulations which may pose environmental hazards to the health of children. The State Board of Health provides staff support to the Council. The Council must report to the Governor and the Legislature by December of 2008 with recommendations on changes in regulation that would decrease environmental hazards to children.

**EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE COMMITTEE (Recommended Amendment):** One representative involved in research in human toxicology is added to the council.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Recommended Amendment (Health & Long-Term Care):** PRO: Children suffer much more quickly and severely from exposure to environmental toxins than do adults. We already know there are suspected connections between toxins and conditions such as autism. Since some environmental toxins are very persistent, we need to develop much better regulations and outreach to limit children's exposure. The government should help mitigate unhealthy conditions. There are efforts going on in local communities, but a state level oversight should set the direction and help coordinate local efforts. School children are especially vulnerable to pesticides when pesticides are being sprayed nearby. There currently is no place to go to find out how to stop exposing kids at school.

CON: This bill duplicates a panel of experts that are already setting statewide standards and policies statewide for the safe use of pesticides. This bill doesn't convene more qualified people to help reduce environmental toxins, just replicates an existing entity.

**Persons Testifying (Health & Long-Term Care):** PRO: Ruth W. Shearer, Ph.D, toxicologist; Vicki Kirkpatrick, Washington State Association of Local Public Health Officials; Ellen Zito, mom; Ryan Kellogg, Public Health Seattle/King County.

CON: Heather Hansen, Washington Friends of Farms and Forests; Patrick Connor, Washington Farm Bureau; Dan Coyne, Croplife America.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Recommended Amendment (Ways & Means):**

CON: This bill duplicates the work of another panel of experts.

**Persons Testifying (Ways & Means):** CON: Heather Hansen, Washington Friends of Farms and Forests.